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Author(s): Richard Braverman

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Spectator 495: Addison and “the Race of People called *Jews*”

RICHARD BRAVERMAN

In the *Spectator* of 27 September 1712, Joseph Addison turned citizen of the world to focus his attention on “the Race of People called *Jews*.”¹ It was not the first time that Jews had caught his attention, since scattered references appear in earlier numbers of the *Spectator*; but number 495 was different because it was devoted entirely to the “Race.” Why is it that Addison focused his attention on the Jews at this time, and why did he furnish the kind of account that he did? The answer to the second question takes up most of this essay, but it is contingent upon the answer to the first: Addison could not have been unaware of the xenophobic climate of the time, particularly in view of the fact that the spirit of toleration he associated with the Whiggish legacy of 1688 was threatened by the Tory resurgence after the general election of 1710.² The climate had already been conspicuously poisoned not long before by the hostile reaction to an unintended consequence of the Naturalization Act of 1709, namely the arrival in London and its environs of thousands of Protestant subjects of the Catholic Elector Palatine of the Rhine in the spring and summer of 1709.³ It was one thing to grant asylum to Protestants who, like the Huguenots, were subject to flagrant Catholic persecution; however, a comparable case could not be made for the Palatine Protestants, who were perceived—to put it in modern terms—as “economic

Richard Braverman teaches in the Department of English and Comparative Literature at Columbia University. He is the author of *Plots and Counterplots: Sexual Politics and the Body Politic in English Literature, 1660-1730* (1993).

refugees." By the summer of 1709 thousands of Palatine émigrés were already encamped at Blackheath and Greenwich at government expense, and with the hue and cry mounting in the press and parliament it was only a matter of time before the call to repeal the Naturalization Act, reached fever pitch. The House of Commons voted to overturn the act, but the venture was blocked by the Lords until dogged pressure by the Tories, combined with the creation of new peers by Anne, brought about its eventual revocation early in 1712, the year that Addison produced his *Spectator* essay on the Jews.

Jews were not Palatines, nor were they candidates for naturalization. Yet like the Palatine émigrés they were not a beloved minority; moreover, the broader reaction to the act touched them in a significant, if indirect, way because naturalization had been promoted on the assumption that immigration would be beneficial to trade. Referring to the act in the *Examiner* in 1710, Swift remarked that supporters of the policy had taken it "into their Imagination, that Trade can never flourish unless the Country becomes a common Receptacle for all Nations, Religions and Languages,"⁴ but as far as he was concerned the fiasco that followed had all but discredited the idea. His reaction was prompted in part by the émigrés' low-church inclinations, yet his broader objection was part and parcel of the ongoing debate over toleration, and on that account he was fiercely opposed to its most outspoken proponent, John Toland, who supported a general naturalization that would include even Jews.⁵ Toland wrote on behalf of the Jews because of their role in promoting trade, an argument that found currency during the debates on readmission under the Commonwealth and which continued to circulate in the early eighteenth century.⁶ Addison tacitly endorses the argument in *Spectator* 495, but while he recognizes the Jewish contribution to trade he does not take up the mantle of naturalization. Instead, he balances Jewish virtues and shortcomings in an account that skirts the related question of assimilation by stressing the tension between civil and religious constructions of Jewish identity within early-eighteenth-century commercial society. He thereby moves the "Jewish question" beyond its principal context, religion, where it was customarily framed within the terms of Christian dogma. On that score, works such as Daniel Whitby's *A discourse of the necessity and usefulness of the Christian revelation by reason of the corruptions of the principles of natural religion among Jews and Heathens* (1705), Thomas Woolston's *The old apology for the truth of the Christian religion against the Jews and Gentiles revived* (1705), and Pierre Allix's *A confutation of the hope of the Jews concerning the last*

redemption (1707) reinforced the presumption that the Jews had renounced the truth of redemption for the expectation of a false Messiah to come. Anti-Semitic tradition played a supporting role here as well, as a sampling of contemporary pamphlet and ballad literature indicates: *The wandering Jew: or the shoemaker of Jerusalem, who lived when our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ was crucified* (1701); *A historical and law treatise against the Jews and Judaism: shewing that by the antient establish'd laws of the land, no Jew hath any right to live in England* (1703); *The devil of Delphos, or, the prophets of Baal: containing an account of a notorious impostor, call'd Sabatia Sevi, pretended Messiah of the Jews. . . .* (1708); *The triumph of envy: or, the vision of Shilock the Jew* (1712). Addison invokes the judgments of Christian apologetics, but his essay carries no hint of "Shilock the Jew" because his criticisms are tempered by a tolerant eye—tempered, possibly, by the sympathetic account of North African Jewry that his father had written some years before.⁷ However, in contrast to his father's closely observed record of the beliefs and customs of the Barbary Jews, his brief account in *Spectator* 495 seems determined to avoid the immediate matter of London's small but growing Jewish community. Instead of focusing on Anglo-Jewry per se, it addresses their role indirectly by considering Jews in civil and religious contexts as those contexts intersect with his broader interests in the developing commercial order. It may have been that the xenophobic climate of the time prevented him from broaching the questions of naturalization and assimilation without politicizing them; but in spite of his manifest recognition of the Jewish contribution to civil society, the essay nonetheless shows that toleration has clear limits for "the Race of People called *Jews*."

Spectator 495 begins with a headnote from the *Odes* of Horace. In citing *Odes* 4.4, Addison draws on the exploits of the two youthful military heroes, Drusus and Tiberius, to acknowledge Jewish fortitude in the light of diasporic history. The lines remind the young men that they embody the essence of a heroic race whose destiny is intimately bound up with them:

Duris ut illex tonsa bipennibus
 Nigrae feraci frondis in Algido,
 Per damna, per caedes, ab ipso
 Ducit opes animumque ferro.

The stanza caps a section that is grounded in the perilous voyage which brought their ancestors to Italy from Troy:

This race that, risen undaunted from Troy's ashes,
 Ferried its gods, old men and children over

The tossing Tuscan sea
To house them safely in Italian towns,

Is like some tough-grained oak, lopped by the woodman
On Algidus, that dark-boughed, verdurous mountain:

It bleeds, it feels the shock,
Yet draws in vigour from the very axe,

Flourishing as fiercely as the severed Hydra
Sprouted at chafing Hercules.⁸

The lopped oak that sprouts forth time after time like the severed head of Hydra is a symbol of defiance that persists until the Roman colonization of Italy. Only then will the race take root, and through the likes of Drusus and Tiberius its trenchant spirit will not only be carried on but will flourish because the two were contingent heirs to empire.⁹ It is their undaunted spirit that augurs hope from the diasporic challenge that followed the fall of Troy, a challenge that Addison took as an appropriate point of departure for his reflections on the Jews, particularly in view of the fact that his interest lay in their tragic history instead of the more immediate matter of London's Anglo-Jewish community. His emphasis might seem peculiar to a modern audience, but it would not have appeared so to his contemporaries, for whom Jews had long been a symbolic presence in religious and political discourse, but were at best a minor presence in the daily lives of most Londoners. Only a small number of Londoners had recurrent contacts with Jews, who comprised an insignificant fraction of London's population in the early eighteenth century: in 1695, when the city had about half a million residents, there were only some eight hundred Jews in all. Spurred by an influx of immigration, the community expanded in the following decades, but when Addison wrote *Spectator* 495 there were probably no more than two thousand Jews in London and in all likelihood somewhat fewer.¹⁰

Despite their small numbers, Jews made an impression in the trading and financial quarters. As testimony to their success, in 1697 the City Corporation passed an act to limit the number of Jews holding seats on the London exchange to twelve out of the fear that they would otherwise dominate it.¹¹ A by-product of Jewish financial acumen was the unflattering image of the stock-jobbing Jew, who took his place next to the figure of the usurious Shylock (who returned to the stage with George Granville's adaptation of 1701, *The Jew of Venice*). Despite these caricatures, however, those with interests in trade believed Jews were vital to

it, and in that light Addison framed an account that combines the metaphor of the wandering-Jew-as-merchant with elements from the anti- and philo-Semitic traditions.¹² Commerce is his chief but not his sole interpretative angle, because he touches upon matters of religion, too, and there he draws upon Christian apologetics to convey the limitations of Jewish beliefs. However, when considering the Jewish role in the civil, commercial society of the early eighteenth century, he is clearly fascinated with the part played by wandering Jews. His inclinations are philo-Semitic here, because, while he is otherwise critical of Jewish insularity, he frankly acknowledges the need for ethnic and religious cohesion to negotiate the exigencies of daily life. In acknowledging that, he invokes the touchstone of the philo-Semitic tradition, the diaspora, although in drawing on the traditional metaphor of the wandering Jew he takes the dispersion out of its theological context and resituates it within the framework of his own Whiggish vision of a commercial society. Surely, his wandering Jews were not poor men who roamed the countryside but wealthy merchants vital to commerce; that they were not wanderers in the traditional sense was the point of the analogy. Yet wanderers they were, insofar as their capital did the traveling while they managed a network that was international in scope. To Addison, these Jews were the sinews of commerce, and he imaged them along those lines in *Spectator* 495:

They are, indeed, so disseminated through all the trading Parts of the World, that they are become the Instruments by which the most distant Nations converse with one another, and by which Mankind are knit together in a general Correspondence. They are like the Pegs and Nails in a great Building, which, though they are but little valued in themselves, are absolutely necessary to keep the whole Frame together.¹³

The passage captures the paradox of Jewish value: Jews are not prized in themselves but for the part they play in the great building of commerce. Their acknowledged status is not surprising, yet the social inflection of Addison's metaphor is—particularly the notion that nations “converse” with one another by virtue of agents who serve as a kind of lingua franca that ultimately produces civility in addition to wealth. Early-eighteenth-century society was “civil” not only because it was thought to be tolerant of religious difference but because it sought to transcend such difference through bonds that evinced man's inherently social nature. Commerce was critical

because it circulated the objects of consumption that united men and women from different walks of life. As J.G.A. Pocock succinctly puts it:

The social psychology of the age declared that encounters with things and persons evoked passions and refined them into manners; it was preeminently the function of commerce to refine the passions and polish the manners; and the social ethos of the age of enlightenment was built upon the concept of close encounters of the third kind.¹⁴

If commerce was a civilizing force that bridged broad differences in value as well as place, Addison thought that postrevolutionary society was “civil” because its commerce produced manners in addition to wealth. Originating in exchange, commerce of this sort evoked man’s social nature so that what began as economic interest ultimately led to social intercourse, with the lingua franca that linked merchants ultimately reproduced in the more local, interpersonal relations of the ideal civil society introduced in *Spectator* 2. It was there that Addison brought together representatives of country, town, and city—Sir Roger de Coverley, Will Honeycomb, and Sir Andrew Freeport—in the hope that others, like them, would learn to transcend religious and political differences and create a truly *civil* society.¹⁵

It is hardly surprising that the same did not hold for Jews. While they might help to build the house of commerce, they could not be civil in Mr. Spectator’s sense because their insular customs and practices prevented them from sharing in its principal medium of exchange, manners. They might be worldly in the way that he noted on his visit to the Royal Exchange in *Spectator* 69, when he was transformed into a citizen of the world, but they were still no more than the “Pegs and Nails” of a building whose construction had social as well as economic dimensions. How they might conflate those dimensions is never explicitly addressed in *Spectator* 495, which conveys a curious lack of concreteness when it comes to London’s Jewish community. Addison may have claimed in *Spectator* 1 to have passed “for a Jew in the Assembly of Stock-Jobbers at Jonathan’s,” but *Spectator* 495 does not reflect much contact with London Jewry. Not only does Addison not refer to the London community there, but he takes “Jews” to be a category irrespective of time and place, failing, for example, to draw even the basic distinction between Sephardim and Ashkenazim. That is a level of particularism he does not reach because, while he values Jews for their contribution to trade, he never transcends the limits

of the house-of-commerce metaphor. Moreover, when the time comes to consider members of the "race" in their own right he retreats from the "civil" discourse in which he initially situates them and reverts to Christian apologetics. The impulse is not surprising, since the social Other is commonly dressed in antithetical garb that casts its adherents as familiar and exotic at the same time. The Jews were no exception: familiar because of their role in trade, they were exotic by virtue of their religious and domestic practices. And since the two spheres do not overlap in his account, the same men who are worldly in one are hidebound in the other.

While individual Jews might make fortunes in finance and trade, we are led to believe that their clannishness led them to resist the process of individuation necessary to inclusion in civil society. Addison never specifies the terms of the process, yet in *Spectator* 2 it is clear that Sir Roger, Sir Andrew, and Will Honeycomb must leave behind their prejudices and forge a new lingua franca in order to unite the passions and interests in a commonality that will allow their symbolic society to surmount the religious and political divisions that scarred the seventeenth century. The process is transformative in that it demands that the participants transcend the defining ties of group or faction in favor of new ties that bind. On its face the task appears to be open-ended, saying in effect that those who wish to participate can. That, however, obscures the price of admission, which was too high for those who, like the Jews, presumably placed group needs first either by nature or circumstance. While that was the general perception it was not, however, wholly true, because a number of Sephardim sought "radical assimilation" and succeeded, severing their ties with the Jewish community in order to become country gentlemen.¹⁶ The number of such cases was small, but in proportion to the Jewish population it was far from negligible, so that it is noteworthy that Addison never refers to what would in fact be cardinal examples of the "civil" society he espouses.

If Jews were remarkably adaptable yet stubbornly clannish at the same time, the paradox was abundantly documented by the main source from which Addison appears to have drawn, Jacques Basnage's *History of the Jews*.¹⁷ The *History* contained a wealth of information on Jewish custom and ceremony as well as history and lore, but above all it stressed the diaspora as the central fact of Jewish reality, and on that score Basnage took up where Josephus left off, tracing the dispersion down to the end of the seventeenth century. Though the account is a mixture of fact and speculation, Basnage is generally skeptical about the millennial claims that

were so attractive to English Puritans in the earlier seventeenth century. The idea that the lost tribes had settled in America was part of the belief that their readmission to England would augur the millennium, since they were apparently everywhere but England.¹⁸ Readmission, however, did not fulfill its promise. Five years after Cromwell permitted the Jews to resettle, Charles II was restored. With the Restoration, interest in the lost tribes ebbed, but it did not dissipate altogether. William Penn, for one, took up the mantle as late as the 1680s, as Basnage points out:

Sir *William Pen* thinks he has discover'd 'em in his *New Republick*, and finds their Faces so very much resembling the Jews (and especially their Children, that when you look upon 'em, you would think your self in the Jews quarter at *London*); Their Eyes are little and black, like the Jews. Moreover, they reckon by Moons; they offer the first Fruits; and have a kind of Feast of Tabernacles. Their Language is Masculine, Short, concise, and full of Energy, in which it much resembles the *Hebrew*.¹⁹

While it is curious that a dark complexion and a “masculine” language signified Jewishness to Penn, his misreading of the evidence testifies to the fascination that the lost tribes still held, even if the controversy over their universal dispersion had outlived its immediate political relevance. Nevertheless, the Jew as Other continued to reinforce religious and cultural differences, and in citing several of these Addison recalls cultural myths designed to reinforce the presumption that Jewishness signified willful segregation in the face of acculturation. That is certainly the subtler message of the myth of Prester John, which Addison duly mentions along with the myth that the Jews had dispersed into the interior of America: “Not to mention *Prester John*’s Country, and discovered in the inner Parts of *America*, if we may give any Credit to their own Writers.”²⁰ The myth was not a single legend but was an amalgam of several sources, though it was unclear from the lot where in fact Prester John’s country was. Some located it in Ethiopia while the majority put it in the East, but wherever it was, it was always close to a colony of Jews whose daily lives were completely cut off from the goings-on of Prester John’s domain. Their separation was reinforced by a mighty river that separated the Jews from their neighbors. Its swift currents subsided only once a week, but because that day coincided with the Jewish sabbath, no one could leave without violating its sanctity. That the river was navigable only at that juncture insinuated that the Jews

were fully capable of crossing the boundary that separated them from outsiders but chose insularity instead. A convenient fiction for reasserting the status of Jews as perpetual outsiders, the fable said, in effect, that the difference between inside and outside was enforced by outsiders who chose not to cross the negotiable boundary that divided them from the social norm. The story resembled others designed to rationalize social difference, but in the case of the Jews it had additional relevance since it was by virtue of their segregation that they were able to survive for as long and in such diverse circumstances as they had. As Basnage, for example, put it:

'Tis the true character of Judaism to continue separate from other Nations. Tho' for Seventeen Hundred years, they have been mixed with Christians, and many Ages before with the Eastern Idolators, yet they have preserved in the midst of 'em, their Books and Rites, and Notion of a *Messiah* as a particular People.²¹

In this vein Addison duly notes the "firm adherence" of the Jews, likewise pointing out that it is their religion that binds them as it separates them from society:

[Their] Dispersion would probably have lost their Religion, had it not been secured by the Strength of its Constitution: For they are to live all in a Body, and generally within the same Enclosure, to marry among themselves, and to eat no Meats that are not killed or prepared their own way. This shuts them out from all Table Conversation, and the most agreeable Intercourses of Life; and, by consequence, excludes them from the most probable Means of Conversion.²²

With the phrase "Strength of its Constitution" Addison echoes Christian apologetics, a tradition that acknowledged Jewish fortitude as it stressed the misguided Jewish commitment to the Messiah as the principal impediment to conversion. In the early eighteenth century that message was restated, among other places, in the sermons delivered by George Stanhope in 1701 and 1702 and issued under the title *Evidence for the Jewish and Christian Faith Compared*; in the frequently reprinted *The Shortest Way with the Jews*, by Charles Leslie; and in the conversion account of John Xeres, *An address to the Jews Containing his reasons for leaving the Jewish, and Embracing the Christian Religion*. While, notes Addison, a fervent devotion to customs and practices kept the Jews socially

separate, it is significant that he balances their civil and religious identities insofar as he intimates that conversion hinges on conversation. Conversation, as he uses it here, is not mere chat but the kind of social commerce promoted by the *Spectator*. As he notes in the opening paragraph of number 495, Jews play a vital role in the “correspondence” of the diverse parts that comprise the house of commerce, a correspondence that is a kind of dialogue since it allows the “most distant Nations [to] converse with one another.” It is a lingua franca that Jews themselves had helped to foster, yet it is evidently a language they cannot master, and for that reason they cannot succeed in the social conversion that Addison hints at. If they cannot become true Englishmen, he implies, it is not because the potential to do so is not there; it is because they will not speak the lingua franca of civil society.

As in Prester John’s legend, Jews could cross the boundary of social difference if they could only loosen the hold of group ties, but, as Addison implies when he remarks upon their “firm adherence to their religion,”²³ they were committed to those ties above all else. That, however, was not the entire story, and in that respect he contradicts his own testimony, if the claim in *Spectator* 1 that he mixed with Jewish stock-jobbers at Jonathan’s can be believed. If accepted on its face, the reference to table conversation signals a curious dependence on received opinion about Jewish merchants and traders, because the usual impediments of the social hierarchy did not obtain in coffeehouses.²⁴ Mr. Spectator may have been the silent observer he claimed to be, but it would be hard for him to have overlooked Jews participating in the very social commerce that was germane to a civil society. Moreover, he would have witnessed men who were pursuing the “most probable means” of social conversion, since many Sephardim were not bound to the Jewish community to the degree that Addison seems to have assumed. In fact, many members of the London community were less insular than their continental kin. Not only were they on the periphery of European Jewry as a group, but they were raised in the Iberian tradition in which Jews had lived as Catholics for generations. When they came to England most of them joined the London congregation, where they married along the lines of economic and kinship networks. However, explains the historian Todd Endelman, “it is doubtful whether they became zealous guardians of the traditions of Israel and even more so that they were successful in passing them on to their prosperous English-born offspring.”²⁵ Moreover, they were open to English culture because they had long endured circumstances that encouraged not only adaptation to but interaction with their environment. As

Endelman points out: "Unlike immigrants from Central and Eastern Europe, who generally arrived in England without prior exposure to the secular culture of the West, the Sephardim brought with them an openness to non-Jewish learning and mores that was a product of their particular historical experience."²⁶ And if the first generations after readmission comprised a tight-knit community, that changed by the early eighteenth century, as Albert Hyamson writes: "from the beginning of the eighteenth century . . . Anglo-Jewry was undergoing a noticeable change and a new generation, very different from the old, was arising."²⁷

While Addison assumes Jewish insularity to be the impediment to conversion, Anglo-Jewry was evidently far more disposed to assimilation than he imagines. As to religious conversion, for example, the number of published accounts of Jews renouncing Judaism in the later seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries is remarkable given the size of the community.²⁸ And with regard to "social conversion," by the early eighteenth century there were a number of success stories of wealthy Sephardim who left the congregation and assimilated into the ranks of the gentry.²⁹ While conversion went on in both senses, Addison's focus, however, remains fixed on the discursive rather than the material reality of Jews: how, that is, they mark the boundaries of social difference and reinforce the bonds of those within them. For that reason he resorts to traditional beliefs about Judaism's deficiencies, turning—particularly in the latter part of the essay—from his own conceptualization of Jews in civil society to their more conventional representation in Christian apologetics. The shift is significant because even while Addison casts the Jews in a tolerant light he is subject to the internal constraints of Anglican dogma, and in that regard he does not end in the spirit that he began. Instead, he implies the danger Jews pose to civil society, a danger that conjures their historical identification with Puritan sectarians. "Their firm Adherence to their Religion," while a virtue in one sense, is the mark of zeal on the other because of its divisive effects: "They were always in Rebellions and Tumults while they had the Temple and Holy City in view, for which Reason they have often been driven out of their old Habitations in the Land of *Promise*."³⁰ As early-eighteenth-century Englishmen well knew, the history of the Jews was the history of Dissent: like the Jews, the Saints were deeply divided when they possessed the Holy City, their zeal leading them to squander the opportunity to build a holy commonwealth. Factionalism cost the Jews a kingdom, too, although its corruption was the result of worldliness. Nonetheless, its demise led to the cult of the Messiah, which was ultimately

seized upon by Christians as the surest sign of misguided Jewish enthusiasm. When Addison reports that the Jews generally married before the age of twenty in the hope that “the *Messiah* may descend from them,”³¹ he duly notes a constant of Jewish conversion narratives and Christian homiletics aimed at the unconverted. The countervailing point, of course, was that the Messiah had already come, a belief that Jews adamantly denied even though its acceptance was the only means to conversion.

It would have been enough that the Jews had renounced the truth once, but the fact that they continued to do so presented evidence of another kind. In this case, resistance was not ascribed to ignorance but fear, fear of Christian truth as a dangerous lure. The perception was reinforced by popular accounts of Jewish parents “rescuing” children who either had sought Christian instruction or who had converted. In one such account Gilbert Burnet told how a young Jewess who had already been baptized was “persecuted” by her family for having been seduced by the story of “that hanged man,” Christ.³² In his *History*, Basnage related a comparable if less dramatic case in which the bishop of Bath and Wells sought to convince the Jewish rabbins that the Messiah that the Jews were seeking had already come:

The Rabbins, who govern the Synagogues, will not permit any Correspondence with the Christians about Religion. Dr. Kidde, Bishop of *Bath and Wells*, offer'd a Conference to the *Cacam of London* [the spiritual leader of the congregation] to convince a young Maid, who had already some knowledge of the Truth; the *Cacam* not only refus'd, but the Maid was shut up by her Parents, and oblig'd to stifle the Seeds of the Truth she had receiv'd.³³

Basnage, it should be added, duly notes that Dr. Kidde “was crush'd under the Ruins of the Episcopal Palace in a Storm which happened in 1703,” but if we can only imagine how the *Cacam* may have interpreted this, it is unthinkable that Basnage or his readers would have sensed a providential touch. Nor would Addison, since resistance to conversion provided powerful corroboration for Christian dogma. If the Jews had believed in the Messiah seventeen hundred years ago and had been converted through the teachings of Paul, argues Addison, then the surest confirmation for the truth of the gospels would have been lost:

Their Number furnishes us with a sufficient Cloud of Witnesses, that attest the Truth of the old Bible. Their

Dispersion spreads these Witnesses through all Parts of the World. The Adherence to their Religion, makes their Testimony unquestionable. Had the whole Body of *Jews* been converted to Christianity, we should certainly have thought all the Prophecies of the Old Testament, that relate to the Coming and History of our Blessed Saviour, forged by Christians, and have looked upon them, with the Prophecies of the *Sybils*, as made many Years after the Events they pretended to foretell.³⁴

That the Jews—as part and parcel of the dispersion—bear witness to the Word even though they do not know that the Messiah has already come, was a constant of Christian apologetics. Since they had been given the truth but had denied it, their quest for the Messiah was futile; but its failure served the higher truth of the new dispensation because, as Charles Leslie put it, “from the *Jews* we *Gentiles* receiv’d the knowledge of his *Resurrection*, and all of the *Gospel*.”³⁵ Since Jews had remained stubbornly attached to the inherent flaw in their quest for redemption and lived apart from the spiritual commerce of Christendom, they served as a corollary of the fortunate fall as well. While that applied to their religious status throughout Christian apologetics, in Addison’s account it applies to their social status, too, because wandering Jews facilitate the lingua franca of civil society even though they are outsiders to it. Once again, Jews are the purveyors of truths they do not accept or understand—in this case the social totality as Addison envisioned it—even though they supposedly harbor the means to social conversion. But recognition is not the problem here, because Addison ignores the evidence to the contrary. It is a limitation inherent in his variation on the wandering Jew, and it is reproduced in the shape of the essay itself because what begins with a heroic reference to Horace ends with a conventional nod to Christian dogma. It is inscribed in the subtle irony of the Horatian headnote as well, since the Trojans, unlike the Jews, assimilated after their diaspora. After all, they found a home in Italy and became Romans, whereas the same could not be said of the wandering Jews.

NOTES

¹Donald F. Bond, ed., *The Spectator*, 5 vols. (Oxford: Oxford Univ. Press, 1965), 4:255.

²Geoffrey Holmes, *British Politics in the Age of Anne* (London: Hambledon Press, 1987), pp. 56-57. The worst fear, of course, was a Jacobite succession, but the prospect of a high-church revival gave rise to suspicions that the Toleration Act of 1689—widely considered the linchpin of the Revolution settlement—would be repealed.

³The act permitted foreign Protestants to become British subjects provided they took the oaths of supremacy and allegiance and received the sacrament in either the Anglican Church or a reformed congregation. As a result more than ten thousand émigrés (or “beggars,” as they were more commonly called) arrived by July. Two years later the parliamentary committee charged with investigating the matter reported that the affair had cost the government upwards of £130,000. For a detailed account of the affair, see H.T. Dickinson, “The Poor Palatines and the Parties,” *English Historical Review* 82, 3 (July 1967): 464-85.

⁴*Examiner*, no. 21 (28 December 1710), in *The Prose Works of Jonathan Swift*, ed. Herbert Davis, 14 vols. (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1939-62), 3:48.

⁵In the preface to *A phillipick Oration to incite the English against the French* (1707; 1709), Toland had advised “all wise legislators” to “encourage the coming of all sorts” on the grounds that “no reason could occur to” him why “other foreign nations may not as safely fill the outskirts of London as the French [Huguenots], since they are sure to bring us the same advantages of power, riches, and industry.” Moreover, he reasoned, their posterity “will be all alike reputed natives; and, in my opinion, the greater diversity of strangers, will render any combination against the old inhabitants the less possible” (p. 84). To Swift’s displeasure, Toland renewed the argument in *Reasons for Naturalizing the Jews in Great Britain and Ireland*, which called for naturalization on the ground of the Jewish contribution to commerce.

⁶William III created a positive climate for Jewish immigration, which he considered favorable to trade, notes Edgar R. Samuel in “The First Fifty Years,” in *Three Centuries of Anglo-Jewish History*, ed. V.D. Lipman (London: W. Heffer, 1961), p. 38.

⁷His father, Lancelot Addison (1632-1703), wrote *The Present State of the Jews, more particularly relating to those in Barbary* (1675), which was based on his experience as chaplain to the Earl of Teviot in Tangier from 1662 to 1670. The book was a sympathetic account which described in detail the social and religious customs of the Barbary Jews and noted their persecution by the Moors. Peter Smithers notes that the younger Addison, following his return to politics with the Hanoverian succession, expressed his concern for the fate of the Jews expelled from Gibraltar under the terms of article ten of the Treaty of Utrecht (*The Life of Joseph Addison* [Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1954], p. 394).

⁸*The Odes of Horace*, trans. James Michie (Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill, 1963), pp. 194-95.

⁹The two were sons of the Empress Livia. Tiberius was nineteen and Drusus fifteen in 23 B.C. when the emperor’s nephew and heir, Marcellus, died, leaving them contingent heirs to the empire.

¹⁰R.D. Barnett, "Anglo-Jewry in the Eighteenth Century," in *Three Centuries of Anglo-Jewish History*, ed. V.D. Lipman (London: The Jewish Historical Society of England, 1961), p. 45.

¹¹*Ibid.*, p. 47.

¹²On the latter, the most comprehensive account is David Katz, *Philo-Semitism and the Readmission of the Jews to England, 1603-1655* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1982).

¹³*Spectator*, 4:256.

¹⁴J.G.A. Pocock, *Virtue, Commerce, and History* (Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1985), p. 49.

¹⁵On the relationship between commerce and manners see Pocock, pp. 234-39. To Addison, he points out, "civil" meant polite as well as civic, because the two were thought to go hand in hand, with commerce driving the engine of sociability.

¹⁶I have borrowed the phrase from Todd Endelman, *Radical Assimilation in English Jewish History, 1656-1945* (Bloomington: Univ. of Indiana Press, 1990), who stresses the assimilative impulse of wealthy Sephardim (pp. 12-13). Malcolm Brown documents their attempt to rise into the ranks of the gentry by imitating English social patterns in "Anglo-Jewish Country Houses from the Resettlement to 1800," *Transactions of the Jewish Historical Society of England* 28 (1984): 20-38.

¹⁷A Protestant divine who fled France for Holland after the revocation of the Edict of Nantes, Jacques Basnage took up residence in Rotterdam, where he published *L'Histoire des juifs depuis Jesus-Christ jusqu'à present* (1706). The English translation was published in 1708. Addison seems to have relied on it for the most part (the book was advertised in *Spectator* 21, 24 March 1711), although other noteworthy sources were available, particularly Leone Modena, *The history of the present Jews throughout the world, Being an ample tho' succinct account of their customs, ceremonies, and manner of living* (trans. from Italian, 1707, 1711); and Isaac Abendana, *Discourses of the ecclesiastical and civil polity of the Jews* (1706; 2nd edn., 1709).

¹⁸While the legend that the lost tribes had settled in America developed a following in England in the earlier seventeenth century, its roots went back to the Spanish conquest, with early evidence coming from the testimony of Spaniards who believed, among other things, that the lost tribes settled in America because they believed that the religious monuments they discovered could not have been built by the Incas: "Seeing the *Indians* were Idolators, and as yet had no knowledge of Iron Instruments employ'd in building Homes," writes Basnage, they concluded that "this structure must be consider'd as a Synagogue erect'd by the Jews" (p. 746). On the full range of early speculation, see Katz, chaps. 2 and 3.

¹⁹Basnage, p. 475; William Penn, *A Letter of the Present State of the Lands of the English in America* (1683), p. 156.

²⁰Here, Addison was following Basnage on the two versions of the legend of the lost tribes: "There are chiefly Two Opinions that have been current with the Jews, and even with Christians: One, that the Ten Tribes went into *Tartary*, in which are still observed some Tracks of Ancient *Judaism*; the other that they have penetrated into *America*" (Basnage, p. 474).

²¹Basnage, p. 478.

²²*Spectator*, 4:257.

²³*Spectator*, 4:256.

²⁴The coffeehouse was a place where social distinctions that applied in other venues were replaced by a different set of rules. As Richard Sennett asserts: "Coffeehouse speech is the extreme case of an expression with a sign system of meaning divorced from—indeed, in defiance of—symbols of meaning like rank, origins, taste, all visibly at hand" (*The Fall of Public Man* [New York: Random House, 1976], p. 82).

²⁵Endelman, p. 25.

²⁶Endelman, p. 11. In *The Jews of Georgian England 1714-1830: Tradition and Change in a Liberal Society* (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society of America, 1979), Endelman argues that the Sephardim "wished to be as much like wealthy Christians as was possible without having to renounce their identity as Jews" (p. 121).

²⁷Albert Hyamson, *The Sephardim of England: A History of the Spanish and Portuguese Jewish Community, 1492-1951* (London: Methuen, 1951), p. 98.

²⁸See, for example, Eleazer Bargishai, *A Brief Compendium* (1653); Paul Scialitti, *A Letter written to the Jewes* (1663); Solomon Franco, *Truth springing out of the earth* (1668); John Jacob, *The Jew turned Christian* (1678); John Alexander, *God's covenant displayed, with a proemial discourse of the reasons of his conversion* (1689); *An Account of the Conversion of Theodore John* (1693); *A True Narrative of God's gracious dealings with the soul of Shalome Ben Shalomoh a Jew: with an account of his conversion* (1699); *A letter from a Jew to Mr. Arande Almanza, the Spanish merchant that was converted from Judaism to the Church of England* (1703); John Meirs, *A short treatise compos'd and published by John Meirs, converted to the Christian faith* (1709); and John Xeres, *An address to the Jews . . . containing his reasons for leaving the Jewish and embracing the Christian religion* (1710).

²⁹See Endelman, pp. 13-16, on the da Costa family.

³⁰*Spectator*, 4:257.

³¹*Ibid.*

³²Gilbert Burnet, *The conversion and persecutions of Eve Cohan* (1680).

³³Basnage, p. 681.

³⁴*Spectator*, 4:257-58.

³⁵Charles Leslie, *The Shortest Way with the Jews* (London, 1699), p. 220.